

# Town of Pagosa Springs Phased Operations Plan During COVID-19

This plan is intended to guide the Town's operations through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This plan is subject to change as circumstances evolve.

March 20, 2020

The goals of this Plan are to:

- Provide for the health and safety of Town employees, elected officials and the general public.
- Provide expectation levels for staff and supervisors during the pandemic for Town operations.
- Provide for a continuity of public service, as possible.

The effective date of each "level" is declared by the Town Manager. The length of time that each level is in place is determined by the Town Manager. The Town may alternate between levels as needed and as circumstances change. For instance, the Town may go from a Level 1 to a Level 3 without going to Level 2. The Town may also decrease in levels and then have to ramp up to higher levels. ***Flexibility is part of this plan.***

## **Level I: Heightened Awareness-Limited Access to Town Facilities (began March 16)**

*Mitigation of community spread of the virus is accomplished through multiple ways. However, Town facilities are still open to the public.*

- Cancellation of group activities, classes, recreation programs, and outside group meetings/room rentals.
- Encourage remote participation such as Zoom meetings or conference calls for groups, and reduced drop in visits.
- Heightened cleaning and disinfecting in Town facilities on an increased schedule.
- Employees provided with cleaning supplies to disinfect their office/workspaces.
- Encouragement of personal safety precautions such as increased handwashing and social distancing practiced at both work and home.
- Sick employees highly encouraged to stay home and contact their medical provider by phone. See **"What to do if you have COVID-19 or believe you have been exposed to the virus."**
- No business travel or training/conferences are permitted (unless online).
- Supervisors may reassign tasks for employees to needed areas as programs and projects shift to meet the Town's needs. Employees may be tasked with job duties that are outside of their normal scope of work.
- Employees who may be **considered vulnerable/high risk employees** (as defined by the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/high-risk-complications.html>) should speak with their supervisor to determine appropriate accommodations. Possible accommodations may include the following:
  - Complete alternative assignment (e.g. front-facing vs back office)
  - Move office space (for example physical relocation to a restricted area)
  - Remote work assignment (see **Remote Work Expectations**)
  - Take a temporary leave of absence. Employees for whom the aforementioned accommodations do not apply, may coordinate with their supervisor to take time off.
- Employees **affected by school closures** and who need leave to care for their child when the school or place of care has been closed due to a public health emergency should speak with their supervisor to determine appropriate accommodations such as remote work. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was signed into law by President Trump on March 18, 2020 and goes into effect 15 days after signing. The Town is reviewing this legislation and will provide more information as we receive it.

## **Level 2: High Concern- Town Facilities Closed to the Public/Reduced Staffing (began March 24-in process)**

*Town facilities are closed to the public for in-person, walk in services. Doors are locked and the public may be permitted in the building by prior appointment only. Employees are still at Town facilities or working remotely and are continuing to provide services through phone, email, online, etc.*

- All of the above precautions in Level 1 apply plus additional guidelines herein.
- Supervisors shall discuss with their employees alternate work schedules, staggered/split shifts, coverage for the office, and possibility of remote work options for employees (see **Remote Work Expectations**). Whether employees work within town facilities-practicing social distancing and other precautions, or work remotely is up to the Supervisor.
- Employees who are unable to work remotely may be assigned alternate tasks that support the Town and/or the community during the emergency.

## **Level 3: Full Implementation/Response- Facilities Closed and Mandated Remote Work**

*Town facilities are closed to all public and staff. There may be limited employees in the buildings who are considered essential and/or are performing essential functions. If there is a mandatory shelter in place determination from the State or County, no employees will be permitted to come to town facilities.*

- All of the above precautions in Level 1 and 2 apply plus additional guidelines herein.
- All employees who are not sick and are able to work shall work remotely (see **Remote Work Expectations**).
- Employees who are unable to work remotely may be assigned alternate tasks that support the Town and/or the community during the emergency.

## **Remote Work Expectations**

*Remote work, also called telework or telecommuting, is an option during times of emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The expectations herein are designed to supplement the town's telecommuting policy. Please refer to the Town's Personnel Handbook Section 612 for more information. Remote work may be more appropriate for some work functions than others. Therefore, employees shall work with their supervisors to determine if this is appropriate and if there is productive work that can be accomplished remotely. All employees who work from home or an alternate location from town facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic requires prior approval from the employee's Supervisor. Supervisors may or may not permit an employee to work from home. Supervisors shall notify the Town Manager if telecommuting has been permitted for an employee. The duration of the time that employees may work remotely is dependent upon the circumstances of the emergency and business needs of the organization. The employee may be called back to work in Town facilities by their Supervisor or Town Manager, as needs evolve.*

- Employees and the supervisors shall develop a work plan that provides for clear expectations for tasks and deliverables, timelines, etc. This work plan shall be attached to the Town's Telecommuting Authorization Form, and the Supervisor and Employee shall sign off on the expectations.
- Supervisor and employee shall establish procedures for communicating with employees. This should include check-ins by phone or email at least twice per shift.
- Employees shall treat the time as work time (e.g. the employee shall not be attending events or social activities that would prevent them from providing quality work during their shift).
- Employees shall be responsive to communications by the public, coworkers and supervisor. They shall check emails regularly. Emails will be monitored and responded to the same day.

- Employee shall be available by phone. If applicable, the town phone line will be forwarded to their personal or work cell phone. They shall check voicemail and return calls promptly.
- Urgent issues will be communicated to the Supervisor immediately.
- Employees shall not use drugs or alcohol during their shift.
- Supervisors may assign additional or new tasks to employees that are outside of the employee's typical duties.
- Employees shall track their work time per usual in Caselle. Any time not worked during the shift shall be taken as PTO.
- If the employee chooses to work from home, employees shall provide devices and equipment to properly work from home (e.g. phone, computer/tablet, internet service, access to files, etc.). Unless the Town mandates that employees work from home, the Town will not be responsible for paying for employees' devices, cellular service or internet service. The employee will not be reimbursed for these expenses.
- If the Town mandates that employees work from home, the Town may reimburse the employee for upgraded internet service or for the use of their personal cell phone during the time of the emergency. The Town may provide a loaner device (laptop, iPad, scanner) if they are available. Supervisors shall catalog and check out all town-owned equipment that the employee uses from home.

***Essential Employees vs. Non-Essential Employees:***

Typically, "Essential employees" are those that must respond even in a crisis. This usually includes Police Officers, some Public Works employees (such as utilities employees, and in some cases Streets and Facilities Division) employees. The Administration staff such as the Town Manager, Town Clerk/Finance Director and the Human Resources/Records Administrator are also considered essential. However, employees who are considered non-essential may still be required to assist the Town in emergency situations and perform "essential functions."

**What to do if you have COVID-19 or believe you have been exposed to the virus:**

If an employee has symptoms of the COVID-19 virus such as a shortness of breath, coughing, or fever, he/she should contact his/her healthcare provider for testing information. The employee shall not come into work and is highly encouraged to stay at home. If an employee has been exposed to COVID-19 or believes that he/she has been exposed, he/she should follow the same procedures. The employee shall notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible of the situation. The Town will pay for four days of paid time off while results of the COVID-19 test are being provided. A doctor's note is required.

- Employees who are sick and have no evidence of COVID-19 may return to work once they are free of fever for 24 hours.
- Employees who are determined to have contracted COVID-19 can return to work only upon completion of isolation/quarantine protocol.
- Employees who are sent home due to exposure to a person who has tested positive shall be evaluated to determine if they can work from home.
  - If yes, will continue to work
  - If no, will receive paid administrative leave, based on federal guidelines.
- Employees may be eligible for 80 hours of emergency paid sick leave through the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act.

## **Other Information:**

### **General Leave Guidelines**

Leave guidelines are changing rapidly as both state and federal governments are putting out new legislation.

- Workers' Compensation – Worker's Compensation could cover an employee if he/she became sick with COVID-19, however, the employee would be required to prove that he/she contracted the illness in the course and scope of employment.
- The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was signed by President Trump on March 18<sup>th</sup> and goes into effect 15 days after signing. The Town is reviewing the provisions of this act and will provide clarification to employees soon.
- Short Term Disability insurance provides eligible employees with 66.67% of their weekly salary (up to \$1500) when an employee is out of work for up to 11 weeks due to injury, illness, surgery, or recovery from childbirth. Benefits will begin after a 14-day elimination period.

### **Benefits**

The Town has been receiving correspondence from our benefit providers concerning their continuation of operations. At this time, all carriers are conducting business with up to 80% of their staff working at home/remotely and remaining staff working in shifts and following social distancing protocols at the office. All are fully operational and committed to minimizing the impact on services.

### **Unemployment Programs**

States are allowed to pay unemployment benefits where:

- An employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, preventing employees from coming to work;
- An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over; and
- An individual leaves employment due to a risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member. In addition, federal law does not require an employee to quit in order to receive benefits due to the impact of COVID-19.

**Questions? Please direct them to your Supervisor, Town Manager, or Human Resources.**